

Metro launches app to stream free movies, songs, TV serials on trains

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Chennai: From March, commuters can board a metro train and watch their favourite movies, songs or TV serials for free at the touch of a button — thanks to a mobile-based entertainment system to be launched by Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL).

CMRL has taken a cue from the inflight entertainment system, but the difference here is that commuters will have to download an app on their smartphones to access the content once they enter a metro station. “We conducted trials in three trains and it was successful.



We will launch the service either by end of March or early April. When we launch, we will perhaps be the first metro rail service in the country to have such a facility,” a metro rail official said.

HOW IT WORKS

- ▶ Download the app
- ▶ Walk into a metro station
- ▶ Switch on the WiFi and connect to the server
- ▶ Select your choice of movies, songs or TV serials to watch in Tamil, Hindi, Telugu or Malayalam
- ▶ Enjoy watching on the go or download and watch offline

Commuters can access a wide variety of content in four languages — Tamil, Hindi, Telugu and Malayalam. They can either watch directly on the app or download it and watch it offline

within a specific period. To provide the service, metro rail is installing servers at all the stations, trains and depot. Commuters, upon installing the app, can connect to the server over Wi-Fi and start viewing the content.

The wireless network that will give access to the content will be different from the Wi-Fi CMRL is planning to install to provide free Internet access to commuters. The connectivity that comes with the content will work only on the app and cannot be used to browse the Internet, he said.

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Official: Commuters can download films in HD quality in seconds

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CMRL recently floated tenders to install and commission wireless network across the 45km phase - 1 and 10km phase - 2 extensions as well as in its fleet of 52 trains. The Wi-Fi will enable commuters to make Internet calls particularly in underground stations, where there are no mobile network signals, despite awarding tenders

three years ago.

The content will be updated almost every day when the trains are brought to the depot for maintenance

“A passenger may take only a maximum of one hour to travel from one point to another in the metro network.

Now that there is no signal on mobile phones in the underground stations, our new service can keep them entertained,” an official said.

The content will be updated almost every day when the trains are brought to the depot for maintenance and the servers in the train will be synced with the one at the depot.

“For providing such a facility, speed is an important factor. We tested the speed during the trials to ensure it is the same across all four coaches of the train. Commuters will be able to download a movie in HD quality in 15 to 20 seconds,” an official said. Efforts are also on to live-stream TV channels through the app.